

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 18939

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, OGEN, UR, US

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL U.S. CONSULATES IN THE U.S.S.R.

1. SUMMARY. THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT TASHKENT HEAD THE LIST OF PROSPECTIVE SITES FOR THE THIRD U.S. CONSULATE IN THE USSR. OUR REASONS FOR THIS RECOMMENDATION ARE BASED ON THE CITY'S SIZE, AND ITS LOCATION IN AN IMPORTANT ETHNIC MINORITY AREA REMOVED FROM THE WESTERN PERIPHERY OF THE COUNTRY. OUR SECOND CHOICE IS TBILISI, WHICH OFFERS SOME OF THE SAME ADVANTAGES, BUT WHOSE LOCATION, FROM THE STANDPOINT OF EXPANDNG THE U.S. PRESENCE, IS NOT AS IDEAL. OUR NEXT PRIORITY IS A CITY IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE COUNTRY, NOVOSIBIRSK OR IRKUTSK. WE RECOMMEND THAT A PACKAGE APPROACH BE ADOPTED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE NEXT TWO U.S. CONSULATES IN ORDER TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PROBABLE HIGH SOVIET INTEREST IN OPENING A CONSULATE IN CHICAGO. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE SIGNED ON JULY 3, 1974, THE U.S. AND THE USSR AGREED TO OPEN ADDITIONAL CONSULATES GENERAL IN TWO OR THREE CITIES OF EACH COUNTRY. KIEV AND NEW YORK WERE DESIGNATED AS THE
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NEXT CITIES FOR THE LOCATION OF CONSULAR ESTABLISHMENTS.

WE ASSUME THAT LOCATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL CONSULATES WILL BE NEGOTIATED WHEN ARRANGEMENTS FOR KIEV ARE SETTLED IN PRINCIPLE. THE EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL U.S. CONSULATES IN THE USSR FOLLOW.

3. TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN (POPULATION-APPROXIMATELY 1,500,000). TASHKENT IS THE SOVIET UNION'S FOURTH LARGEST CITY AND IS LOCATED IN THE CENTER OF AN ETHNIC MINORITY AREA WHOSE PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION IS INCREASING. THE CITY IS WITHIN EASY TRAVELLING DISTANCE OF THE CAPITALS AND IMPORTANT CITIES OF FOUR OTHER SOVIET CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS-- TURKMENISTAN, TADZHIKISTAN, KIRGIZIA, AND KAZAKHSTAN. THE TOTAL POPULATION OF THIS AREA IS ABOUT 43 MILLION. THE CONSULAR DISTRICT SHOULD INCLUDE ALL FIVE REPUBLICS. IN ADDITION TO BEING A CENTER OF MOSLEM CULTURE, THE AREA IS GROWING IN ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE, PARTICULARLY IN COTTON AND WHEAT CULTIVATION AND THE GENERATION OF ELECTRIC POWER. THE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE AREA IS REFLECTED IN THE FACT THAT ONE FULL POLITBURO MEMBER -- KUNAYEV IN KAZAKHSTAN -- AND ONE CANDIDATE MEMBER -- RASHIDOV IN UZBEKISTAN -- ARE BASED IN THE AREA. TAKEN TOGETHER THE FIVE CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS BORDER ON IRAN, AFGHANISTAN, AND CHINA AND ARE IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO PAKISTAN, INDIA AND MONGOLIA. A CONSULATE IN TASHKENT WOULD OFFER POSSIBILITIES FOR BALANCING OUR MOSCOW-ORIENTED VIEW OF THE USSR, EXTEND THE U.S. PRESENCE TO A NON-EUROPEAN SECTION OF THE COUNTRY, AND GIVE US A PLACEMENT OF CONSULATES MORE COMPARABLE TO THE PATTERN OF SOVIET CONSULATES IN THE U.S. IT WOULD ALSO PRESENT ATTRACTIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING USIA INFORMATION AND EXCHANGE PROGRAMS TO A SIGNIFICANT AND ETHNICALLY DIFFERENT SEGMENT OF THE SOVIET POPULATION ONLY OCCASIONALLY REACHED AT PRESENT. ADDITIONALLY, IF AMERICAN TOURISM TO THE SOVIET UNION CONTINUES TO INCREASE, WE EXPECT THAT SUCH CITIES AS SAMARKAND, BUKHARA, AND KHIVA LOCATED IN THE AREA WILL ATTRACT LARGER NUMBERS OF U.S.-CITIZEN TOURISTS.

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3. TBILISI, GEORGIA (POPULATION-APPROXIMATELY 900,000). TBILISI IS A VITAL CITY WITH AN ACTIVE, CULTURED POPULATION LOCATED IN AN AREA OF TRADITIONAL NATIONALISM OFTEN HOSTILE TO RUSSIAN INFLUENCE. THE CAUCASUS REPUBLICS OF GEORGIAN, ARMENIA, AND AZERBAIDZHAN HAVE A TOTAL POPULATION OF OVER 12 MILLION AND BORDER COLLECTIVELY ON TURKEY AND IRAN, BOTH COUNTRIES HAVING HAD SIGNIFICANT ROLES IN THE AREA'S

HISTORY AND CULTURE. THE CAPITALS OF THE THREE REPUBLICS, TBILISI, YEREVAN, AND BAKU, ARE A MAXIMUM OF TWO HOURS APART BY AIR. GEORGIANS, ARMENIANS, AND AZERBAIDZHANIS HAVE SHOWN THEMSELVES TO BE OPEN AND FRIENDLY TO AMERICANS AND WE BELIEVE THE AREA IS FERTILE GROUND FOR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL-INFORMATIONAL WORK AND CONTACTS. OF THE THREE CAUCASIAN CAPITALS WE PREFER TBILISI BECAUSE IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT POLITICALLY AND ALSO LOGISTICALLY EASIEST TO SUPPORT FROM MOSCOW. IT ALSO HAS THE MOST ACTIVE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LIFE. AMERICAN TOURISM TO THE AREA IS ALREADY RELATIVELY HIGH AND FROM A CONSULAR-FUNCTION STANDPOINT THERE ARE EVEN BETTER REASONS FOR LOCATING IN THE CAUCASUS THAN IN CENTRAL ASIA.

4. SIBERIA AND THE FAR EAST. AT SOME POINT IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WITH THE EXPERIENCE GAINED FROM OUR OPERATIONS IN LENINGRAD, KIEV AND POSSIBLY OTHER CITIES, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD PUSH FOR A CONSULATE IN A MORE REMOTE AREA OF THE SOVIET UNION. NOVOSIBIRSK (POPULATION ABOUT 1,200,000) AND IRKUTSK (POPULATION ABOUT 500,000) ARE GROWING CITIES IN AREAS OF IMPORTANT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE COUNTRY AND, PARTICULARLY THE FORMER, WHICH IS A SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CENTER WITH A WELL EDUCATED POPULATION, PRESENTS INTERESTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR POLITICAL AND CULTURAL WORK. IRKUTSK'S PRINCIPAL ADVANTAGE IS ITS PROXIMITY TO THE MAIN AREAS OF SIBERIAN MINERALS, FUEL, AND POWER DEVELOPMENT. IF TRADE BETWEEN THE WEST COAST OF THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET FAR EAST AND SIBERIA GROWS CONSIDERABLY, THE PORT OF NAKHODKA (POPULATION ABOUT 110,000) COULD ALSO BE AN ADVANTAGEOUS SITE. SINCE THERE IS ALREADY A JAPANESE CONSULATE
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GENERAL IN THE CITY, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT TO NEGOTIATE THE OPENING OF A CONSULATE IN THE CITY AT SOME FUTURE DATE.

5. PACKAGE NEGOTIATION. THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT, AFTER THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR KIEV AND NEW YORK HAVE BEEN FULLY SETTLED, WE ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE THE OPENING OF THE NEXT TWO CONSULATES IN A PACKAGE, RATHER THAN SEPARATELY. THERE IS HIGH SOVIET INTEREST IN OPENING UP IN CHICAGO NEXT AND WE SHOULD USE THIS DESIRE AS LEVERAGE TO PUSH FOR OUR PREFERENCES BEYOND THE THIRD CONSULATE. WE RECOMMEND THAT AS A FIRST PREFERENCE WE AIM FOR OPENING TASHKENT ONE YEAR AFTER KIEV AND TBILISI ONE YEAR AFTER TASHKENT. AS A FALL-BACK POSITION, WE COULD ACCEPT EITHER

YEREVAN OR BAKU AS THE SECOND CITY. IF THE LATTER
TWO CITIES SEEM TO BE OUT, WE COULD ALSO NEGOTIATE
FOR THE SIBERIAN OR THE NAKHODKA OPTION. IN ANY CASE,
WE SHOULD NOT ALLOW SOVIETS TO PUSH FOR A SECOND
CITY ON THE WEST COAST OR WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI UNTIL
WE MOVE INTO SIBERIA.
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